

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3363

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1792

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, / 08,5, UY

SUBJ: DESIGNATION OF VICE PRESIDENT

REF: MONTEVIDEO 1342

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BORDABERRY HAS DESIGNATED ALBERTO DEMICELI AS NATION'S NEW VICE PRESIDENT. DESIGNATION F DEMICELI APPEARS TO BE A COMPROMISE AVEEPTABLE TO BORDABERRY AND SENIOR MILITARY COMMANDERS.

2. PRESIDENT, ACTING IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, DESIGNATED TODAY (JUNE 28) DR. DEMICELI AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE TO REPLACE THE RECENTLY DECEASED MARTIN ETCHEGOYEN. THE 78-YEAR-OLD DEMICELI, WHO SERVED AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY 40 YEARS AGO UNDER THE THEN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL REGIME OF GABRIEL TERRA, IS PRESENTLY ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE. AS SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE, DEMICELI'S APPOINTMENT FOLLOWS THE PRECEDENT SET IN THE ASE OF ETCHEGOYEN THAT THE JOB OF VICE PRESIDENT OF THE NATION AND HEAD OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE WILL BEHELD BY THE SAME PERSON. DEMICELI'S APPOINTMENT NEVERTHELESS SOME-
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WHAT OF A SURPRISE AS RECENT RUMORS HAD CENTERED ON POSSIBLE

DESIGNATION OF RETIRED GENERAL MARIO AGUERRONDO OR NUMBER TWO IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE, DR. APARICIO MENDEZ..DEMICHELI, ALTHOUGH MENTALLY ALERT, HAS SUFFERED FROM ILL HEALTH IN RECENT MONTHS. HE HAD STATED PUBLICLY THAT HE HAD NO AMBITIONS FOR THE NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENCY AND THAT HE CONSIDERED PRESIDENT BORDABERRY FREE TO DESIGNATE ANY CANDIDATE OF HIS CHOICE BOTH TO THIS POSITION AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

3. MILITARY OFFICIAL WHO HAD PERSONALLY TALKED WITH RETIRED GENERAL AGUERRONDO TOLD EMBOFF JUNE 28 THAT AGUERRONDO HAD BEEN OFFERED THE POST OF VICE PRESIDENT BUT HAD TURNED IT DOWN. AGUERRONDO, ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE, WAS UNWILLING TO ACCEPT ANY SECNDARY POSITION WHICH WOULD NOT GIVE HIM FULL CONTROL OVER POLICIES FOR WHICH HE COULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE. MILITARY SOURCE WENT ON TO SUGGEST THAT DEMICHELI WAS SELECTED BECAUSE HE WAS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL CONCERNED. OFFICIAL IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY, IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF TODAY, ALSO STATED THAT AGUERRONDO HAD TURNED DOWN THE VICE PRESIDENCY. THIS SOURCE COMMENTED THAT SELECTION OF DEMICHELI WAS MORE ADVANTAGEOUS TO PRESIDENT BORDABERRY AND THE THREE MILITARY COMMANDERS IN CHIEF THAN WOULD HAVE BEEN SELECTION OF AGUERRONDO. IN HIS ANALYSIS, AGSERRONDO AS VICE PRESIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN THREAT TO BORDABERRY'S OWN TENURE WHILE THREE CINCS WOULD HAVE SEEN SOME OF THEIR OWN CO-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY REDUCED BY THE PRESENCE OF A SENIOR (ALBEIT RETIRED) MILITARY OFFICER IN THE VICE PRESIDENCY.

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